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S E C R E T AMMAN 004361

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN WELCOMES FORMATION OF IRAQI GOVERNING COUNCIL "WITH CAUTION"

REF: A. STATE 202537

[B](#). AMMAN 2294

Classified By: PolCouns Doug Silliman for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (U) Charge and PolCouns presented ref a points on formation of the Iraqi Governing Council July 15 to Ali al-Ayed, the new Director of Foreign Minister Muasher's Private Office, and Samer Dabbas, the Private Office Iraq action officer. Charge emphasized that the formation of the Council is based on UNSCR 1483, that the council will have real authority, and that it is a serious step toward the formation of a new Iraqi government.

[1](#)2. (S) Ayed noted that FonMin Muasher on July 14 had welcomed the council in a joint press conference with Russian FonMin Ivanov (septel). (Note: Muasher called the Council "a positive step, hopefully towards the formation of a government elected by the Iraqi people and that would transcend sectarian representation." end note.) However, Ayed continued, Jordan has several concerns about the Council and welcomes it "with caution." First, Jordan is concerned that 13 of the 25 members are Shia, and worries that all decisions will be made on a sectarian basis and therefore by the Shia majority. Charge and PolCouns responded that the composition of the Council is meant to mirror broadly the composition of the Iraqi people. Second, Ayed argued, Jordan does not want the new Iraqi government to be a federation which could encourage the future "fragmentation" of Iraq. Third, Dabbas said Jordan would have preferred to see more technocrats and fewer politicians on the Council. The Charge pointed out that CPA has retained many of the technocrats from the previous regime in the senior ranks of the ministries. Finally, Ayed said Jordan would be concerned if INC leader Ahmed Chalabi becomes head of the Governing Council, reiterating Jordan's legal and political concerns about seeing Chalabi in a leadership role in Iraq (ref b).

[1](#)3. (S) COMMENT: Jordan strongly supports the coalition's effort to create a unified, stable, democratic, and prosperous Iraq. The caution with which the GOJ greeted the Governing Council is based mostly on Jordanian fears of what could go wrong -- especially a fear of the emergence of a Shia dominated state on its eastern border.

[1](#)4. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

HALE